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March 22, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support American Health Care Act (AGC Key Vote)

Dear Speaker Ryan:

On behalf of the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) and its 26,000 commercial construction company members, I strongly urge you to support the changes to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) that are included in the American Health Care Act (AHCA). It is undeniable that elements of the Affordable Care Act need to be changed and the AHCA provides an opportunity to address several of the flaws in the ACA. At the same time, the AHCA keeps important insurance market reforms such as providing dependent coverage until age 26 and barring insurers from charging higher premiums for individuals with pre-existing conditions. AGC will score this vote as a key vote for the education of its members on its congressional candidate scorecard.

AGC has long supported the employer-provided health care model while, at the same time, ensuring that it is easy and affordable for employers to provide coverage to their employees. The increased flexibility in the AHCA for health savings accounts and flexible savings arrangements will offer construction employers the ability to expand coverage to their employees and limit the financial hardships of purchasing health care services. The AHCA also effectively repeals the employer mandate, and creates health insurance premium savings by permanently repealing the ACA's health insurance tax, medical device tax, and prescription drug taxes, which will all lower the cost of employer-provided health care coverage.

Additionally, the AHCA delays the imposition of the so-called Cadillac Tax on high-value health plans until 2025. While a delay is a positive development, AGC urges the House and Senate to continue to work to go a step further and fully repeal the 40 percent excise tax on health benefits before sending the bill to the president. AGC remains concerned that any future new taxes on health benefits of hard working taxpayers could reduce the benefits in the AHCA.

AGC opposed the original ACA because we did not believe it created a framework that would reduce health care costs, but instead increased new compliance and complexity problems for employers. The achievable, meaningful reforms provided in the AHCA will reduce complexity and compliance problems and help reduce the cost of health care so employers can maintain and expand the health care benefits they offer their employees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey D. Shoaf".

Jeffrey D. Shoaf
Senior Executive Director, Government Affairs